

WI-274

c. 1890, c. 1925

B. L. Gillis & Son Store Building  
(Feldman's Furniture Store)  
Salisbury  
Private

The three-story brick commercial block commonly known as the Feldman's furniture store on West Market Street dates around 1888-90 and was occupied by many years by B. L. Gillis & Son, wholesale grocers. Initially erected as a two-story common bond brick warehouse type building, the Victorian storefront included large glass display windows, raised brick segmental arches, and an ornamental iron cresting that incorporated the firm name. The building fronted Dock Street (now West Market) and extended deeply into the lot where there was access to the wharfage along the Wicomico River. An elevator, powered by a gasoline engine housed in a small structure on the south side of the store, provided movement between the two floors. The building was raised to a three story height sometime during the next decade, and during the mid 1920s the Dock Street facade was restyled in Tudor Revival taste. Flemish bond brickwork, combined with limestone corners, window facings, as well as decorative coat of arms and shield medallions transformed the red brick facade.

Allison A. Gillis purchased the property in May 1890 and the business continued until his death in 1913. He left two heirs, Edna Gillis Tull and Mamie Gillis Grier, who retained the title to the property until 1923. The Sanborn Insurance map of 1916 indicates the building housed the Peninsula Motor Company with a capacity of 40 cars

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in the showroom. In 1923 the property was transferred to Samuel S. and William Feldman, who developed the Feldman's Brothers furniture business that they began in 1906. By the mid 1930s to be classed as one of the largest furniture stores in the region.

MARYLAND HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN INFORMATION

RESOURCE NAME: B. L. Gillis & Son Store Building (Feldman Brothers)

MHT INVENTORY NUMBER: WI-274

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE PLAN DATA

1. Historic Period Theme(s):      Architecture

2. Geographic Orientation:          Eastern Shore

3. Chronological/Development Period(s):      Industrial/Urban Dominance  
1870-1930

4. Resource Type(s):                  Commercial Bldg

**Maryland Historical Trust  
State Historic Sites Inventory Form**

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF  
HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Survey No. WI-274

Magi No.

DOE ☐ yes ☐ no

**1. Name** (indicate preferred name)

historic A. A. Gillis Store, B. L. Gillis & Son

and/or common Feldman Brothers' Furniture Store

**2. Location**

street & number 150 West Market Street ☐ not for publication

city, town Salisbury ☐ vicinity of congressional district First

state Maryland county Wicomico

**3. Classification**

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

**4. Owner of Property** (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Feldman Brothers Inc.

street & number 150 West Market Street telephone no.:

city, town Salisbury state and zip code Maryland 21801

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Wicomico County Clerk of Court Map 107, Par. 1088  
liber 1285

street & number Wicomico County Courthouse folio 684

city, town Salisbury state MD 21801

**6. Representation in Existing** Historical Surveys

title

date ☐ federal ☐ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records

city, town state

## 7. Description

Survey No. WI-274

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved      date of move _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

Historically identified as the B. L. Gillis & Son building and/or the A. A. Gillis store building, and known by most area residents as Feldman's furniture store, the three-story, rectangular brick commercial block is located at 150 West Market Street (formerly Dock Street) in the central business district of Salisbury, Wicomico County, Maryland. The building faces east.

Estimated to date around 1890 and remodeled around 1925, the three-story, four-bay by nine-bay brick commercial block is supported on a brick foundation, and it is covered by a low pitched gable roof hidden behind a parapet wall. The building is flanked by two story commercial block on the north side and partially covered by a mid to late twentieth century addition on the south side.

The east (main) elevation dates from the early twentieth century remodeling of the Victorian storefront. The Flemish bond brick facade, trimmed in stone, reflects a version of the Tudor Revival. The first floor storefront has been altered with a heavy shed roof and late glass display windows. The second and third floors have remained less altered. The corners of the Flemish bond brick facade are trimmed with molded limestone, and the two floors of window openings are framed in molded stone as well. The windows openings have been in filled. Stretching across the top of the third floor windows is a carved stone trefoil molding that overhangs the wall surface below. Centered in the upper wall surface is a limestone coat of arms, which is flanked by smaller shield emblems also carved in stone. The parapet wall is stepped and capped with a molded stone coping.

The south side elevation is partially covered by the mid twentieth century addition. The ten-course common bond wall is divided into nine bays by brick buttresses. An asymmetrical fenestration of paired as well as single segmental arched window openings characterizes the wall surface. Each window opening is accented with a raised brick lintel that follows the line of the segmental arch.

The north side is largely covered by the adjacent two-story brick addition, and the west elevation is obscured on the first floor by a single story addition. The second and third floors are covered with sheet metal. The end wall is finished with a parapet..

The first floor interior has been reworked to suit a modern furniture showroom.

# 8. Significance

Survey No. WI-274

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates	Builder/Architect
check: Applicable Criteria: <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D	
and/or	
Applicable Exception: <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D <input type="checkbox"/> E <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> G	
Level of Significance: <input type="checkbox"/> national <input type="checkbox"/> state <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> local	

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

The three-story brick commercial block commonly known as the Feldman's furniture store on West Market Street dates around 1888-90 and was occupied by many years by B. L. Gillis & Son, wholesale grocers. Initially erected as a two-story common bond brick warehouse type building, the Victorian storefront included large glass display windows, raised brick segmental arches, and an ornamental iron cresting that incorporated the firm name. The building fronted Dock Street (now West Market) and extended deeply into the lot where there was access to the wharfage along the Wicomico River. An elevator, powered by a gasoline engine housed in a small structure on the south side of the store, provided movement between the two floors.(1) The building was raised to a three story height sometime during the next decade, and during the mid 1920s the Dock Street facade was restyled in Tudor Revival taste. Flemish bond brickwork, combined with limestone corners, window facings, as well as decorative coat of arms and shield medallions transformed the red brick facade.

Allison A. Gillis purchased the property in May 1890 and the business continued until his death in 1913. He left two heirs, Edna Gillis Tull and Mamie Gillis Grier, who retained the title to the property until 1923.(2) The Sanborn Insurance map of 1916 indicates the building housed the Peninsula Motor Company with a capacity of 40 cars in the showroom.(3) In 1923 the property was transferred to Samuel S. and William Feldman, who developed the Feldman's Brothers furniture business that they began in 1906.(4) By the mid 1930s to be classed as one of the largest furniture stores in the region.(5)

This building deserves listing in *Category B*, which identifies buildings that should be preserved since it is a structure that exhibits some good architectural features. Despite the reworked first floor front, the building retains many significant features that contribute to the downtown historic district.

Survey No. WI-274

## PS-2746

WI-274  
B. L. Gillis & Son Store Building  
(Feldman Brothers)  
150 West Market Street  
Salisbury, Wicomico County, Maryland  
Chain of title

Map 107, Parcel 1088

1285/684                      Feldman Investment Corporation

to

1/30/1992                      Feldman Brothers, Inc.

JCK 133/70                      George Miller, City of Baltimore

to

11/5/1923                      Samuel S. Feldman  
William Feldman

Mortgage  
JCK 118/267                      George Miller

to

7/10/1920                      Mamie Gillis Grier

JCK 118/253                      Edna Gillis Tull, et al., (Harry C. Tull, Mamie Gillis Grier,  
and Frederic A. Grier, Jr.)

to

7/10/1920                      George Miller



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A. A. Gillis Store  
(Feldman Brothers)  
150 West Market Street  
Salisbury, Wicomico County, Maryland  
Chain of title continued

FMS 6/117

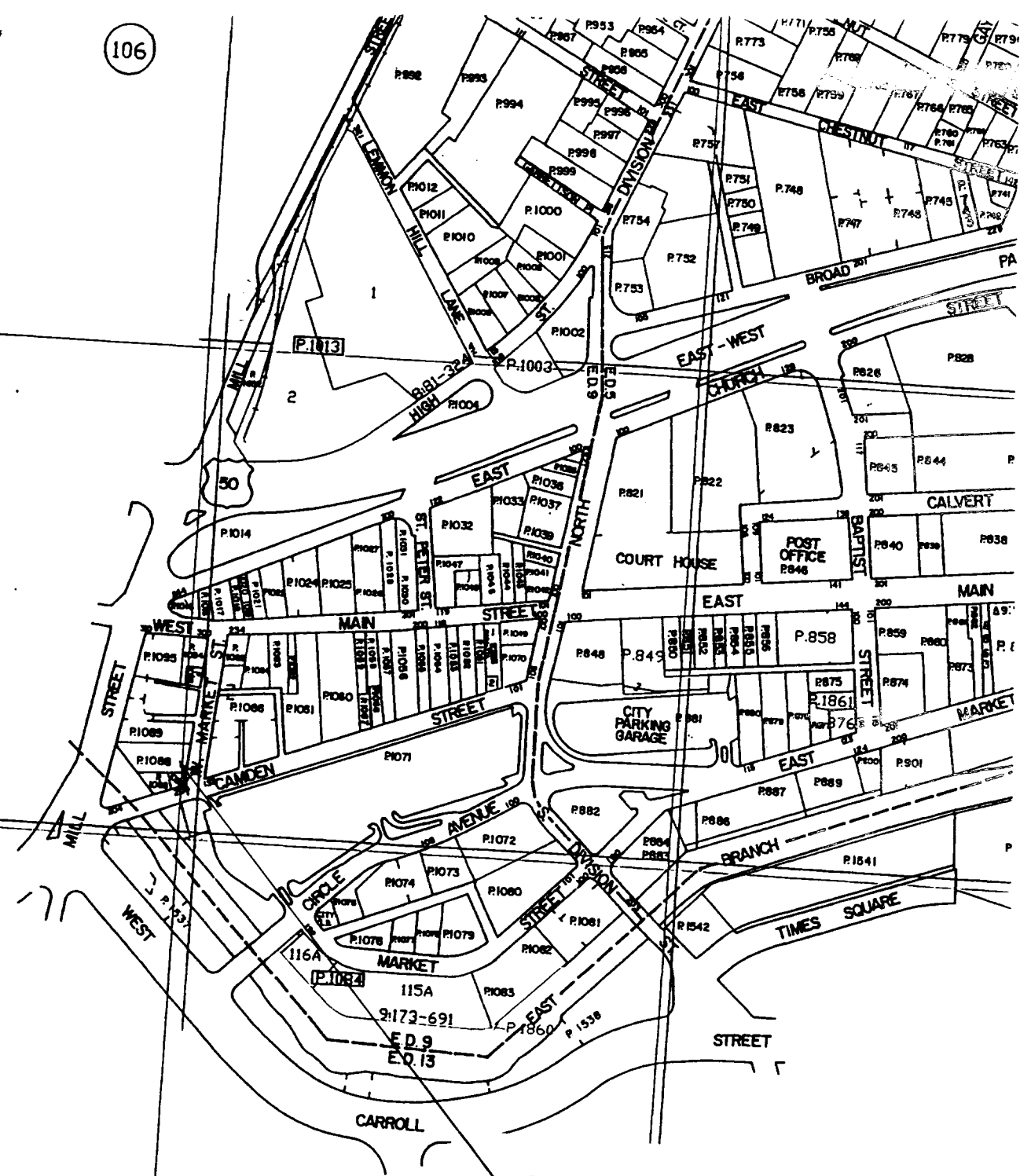
S. Frank Toadvine, Decatur, Alabama

to

5/17/1890

Allison A. Gillis  
the said Allison A. Gillis having died intestate on or about  
6/18/1913 leaving surviving him two children; Edna Gillis  
Tull and Mamie Gillis Grier

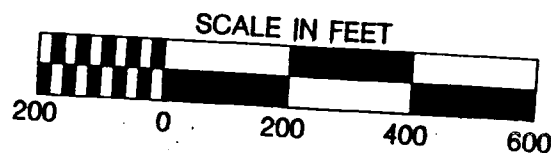
\$4,250.00 all that lot or parcel of ground lying in the City  
of Salisbury in Wicomico County...bounded on  
the North by an alley lying between the property  
hereby conveyed and the lots of William H.  
Rounds, Albert Gottschalk, William B.  
Tilghman, Randolph Humphries on the South  
by East Camden Street, on the East, by Dock  
Street and on the West by the Wicomico River.



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(Feldman Brothers)

Wicomico County, Maryland Tax  
Map 107, Parcel 1088

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B. L. Gillis & Son Store Building  
(Feldman Brothers)

Salisbury, Maryland Quadrangle  
1942

